

***I Am Able to State My Own Ideas.
I Can Handle Personal Difficulties.***

AREA: Knowledge of Self and Others
CATEGORY: Understanding and Accepting Self
TIME: 50 minutes
GROUP SIZE: Small group or class **GRADE LEVEL:** 9-10
MATERIALS: "Managing Hassles" activity sheet and "Alternatives for Solving Hassles" student handout

Managing Hassles

Introduction:

People who understand and get along with others can typically find ways to deal with conflicts and examine the consequences of them. This exercise will allow students to explore alternatives for solving everyday hassles.

Procedure:

1. Distribute the "Managing Hassles" activity sheet.
2. With the class, read the information on the activity sheet.
3. Ask students to individually answer the questions on the back of the activity sheet.
4. Ask for volunteers to share their answers. Students may pass if they do not feel comfortable sharing their answers.
5. Distribute and discuss the "Alternatives for Solving Hassles" student handout. Ask students for their opinions about each alternative. Ask them to share a time when they have used one of the alternatives.
6. Have students jot down answers to these questions, "What did you learn about yourself from this activity? Which of the six alternatives would you like to try to use more often? Would you like to join a small group that meets regularly to discuss dealing with conflicts and hassles?"
7. Collect and review students' answers to the questions.

Notes:

Be aware of students who say that they do not want to use any of the suggested alternatives. These students may need individual counseling. In order to begin the discussion sections, you may need to give personal examples.

Evaluation Suggestions:

Use procedure step #7 as an evaluation.

Managing Hassles

Name: _____ Date: _____

Everyone gets into hassles, whether they are with a parent, teacher, friend, or stranger. Hassles can be over anything, big or small. Hassles can have positive outcomes. Think of a time a hassle turned out well and a problem was solved, or a situation managed, or there was just a "clearing of the air." Conflicts can also result in negative feelings that leave us feeling bad about ourselves and others. Has either happened to you?

Types of Conflicts and Hassles

There are three major types of conflicts with these results:

1. **Both people feel hurt;** both people fight (physically or verbally). When this happens, the problem continues. There is no respect for self or others as a result. Most likely, there will be another fight.
2. **One person feels hurt and the other gets his or her way.** One person fights (physically or verbally). Other person quits or runs. Problem may be settled. Both people disrespect each other and self. The loser may seek revenge or take it out on someone or something else.
3. **No one is hurt.** No one fights or argues. Each says his or her position. Each person listens. Alternatives are used to settle it. Conflict gets settled. No "loser" or "winner." Mutual respect for each other and self.

These Things Make Conflicts or Hassles Worse

- **Violence (physical or verbal)** destroys any basis for compromise and ruins friendships. It rarely deals with the real problem; it usually just causes more problems. People don't often forget physical or verbal abuse.
- **Running away** prevents a person from really solving a problem. It just pops up again later. People who run away from problems lose the respect of others and themselves. It can become a habit. People who give in are usually taken advantage of by others.
- **Telling on someone** only makes the problem worse. It makes others lose respect. It usually means you want others to solve hassles and make decisions for you. You should only tell on someone when the situation may result in someone getting hurt.



Share a time you used violence, ran away, or told on someone.

a) What was the situation?

b) What happened? How did you handle the situation?

c) How would you handle it if you could do it over?

d) How do you feel about your decision?



Alternatives for Solving Hassles

1. ***Use "I" messages***—State the problem in terms of how it makes you feel; do not place blame on the other person. Example of an "I" message: "I am really hurt when you talk behind my back." Example of a "you" message that places blame: "You are so stupid when you talk behind my back."
2. ***Listen closely***—Let the other person know you are willing to listen to his or her side. Example: "I'm listening," or "Go ahead; I'll listen."
3. ***Get help***—Use others to help solve a problem. A third person can often bring a new perspective or solutions to a conflict.
4. ***Make a deal***—Compromise. Being willing to give in to certain conditions if the other person is also willing can usually be done by making a suggestion.
5. ***Apologize***—Let the other person know you are sorry the hassle happened, whether you feel you are right or wrong. If you really feel as though you are wrong, you can gain respect from others by apologizing. Example: "We don't seem able to solve this, but I am sorry you feel badly about it. I do too."
6. ***Cool it***—Dropping it is good for cooling off or avoiding no-win situations.

